

# **RADAR OPERATOR TRAINING STANDARD**

## **Michigan Speed Measurement Task Force**

**Revision January 31, 2001**

The goal of this standard is to ensure that all radar operators in Michigan have adequate training and experience in the use of speed measuring radar devices.

With respect to the adjudication of traffic speeding cases involving speed-measuring radar devices, the Michigan Court of Appeals ruled that the radar operator must have adequate training and experience in order to avoid any violation of the due process rights of a defendant [PEOPLE V. FERENCY, 133 MICH APP 526 (1984)]. Moreover, in its ruling, the Court of Appeals encouraged the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning (O.H.S.P.) to establish a set of radar operator training recommendations. As a consequence of this ruling, O.H.S.P. directed the Michigan Speed Measurement Task Force (M.S.M.T.F.) to develop a radar operator training standard and to work with the Michigan Commission On Law Enforcement Standards (M.C.O.L.E.S.) to develop a M.C.O.L.E.S. approved radar operator training program. This has led to the statewide certification of all radar operators and radar instructors.

With respect to the administration and maintenance of the statewide radar operator training and certification program, the Michigan Speed Measurement Task Force makes the following recommendations:

1. The Michigan Speed Measurement Task Force recommends that all radar operators be certified by M.C.O.L.E.S. before issuing speeding citations in Michigan.
2. The Michigan Speed Measurement Task Force recommends that radar operators be recertified as required by M.C.O.L.E.S.
3. The Michigan Speed Measurement Task Force recommends that a sufficient number of training centers be maintained around the state to meet ongoing radar operator training needs.
4. The Michigan Speed Measurement Task Force recommends that a sufficient number of M.C.O.L.E.S. approved radar instructors exist to meet ongoing radar operator training needs.
5. The Michigan Speed Measurement Task Force recommends that M.C.O.L.E.S. provide ongoing statewide administrative support for radar operator and instructor training programs, including the maintenance of a centralized database that would enable the criminal justice system to determine which radar operators are currently certified.
6. The Michigan Speed Measurement Task Force recommends that M.C.O.L.E.S. continues to maintain an up-to-date computer-based database for all appropriate radar training records and facilitates access of these records by the complete Michigan criminal justice system.

The Michigan Speed Measurement Task Force recommends the following minimum training for all radar operators who are not currently certified by M.C.O.L.E.S.

1. The course of instruction shall meet with the approval of M.C.O.L.E.S. and, it is recommended that it be modeled after "The Michigan Basic Radar Operator Training Course", which was developed by the Michigan Speed Measurement Task Force for M.C.O.L.E.S.
2. The specific training objectives for this are to provide the trainee with the knowledge, skills and ability to:

- a. Describe the association between excessive speed and accidents, injuries, and deaths as well as the highway safety benefits of effective speed control. Also, describe the association between highway speed and energy conservation.
  - b. Describe the basic principles of radar speed measurement.
  - c. Demonstrate basic skills in verifying and operating a specific radar device(s).
  - d. Identify the specific radar instrument(s) used by the trainee's agency and describe their major components and functions.
  - e. Identify and describe the laws, court ruling, regulations, policies, and procedures affecting radar speed enforcement in Michigan.
  - f. Demonstrate the ability to prepare and present records and courtroom testimony relating to radar speed enforcement in Michigan.
3. The minimum course of instruction shall consist of:
  - a. Sixteen hours of classroom instruction.
  - b. Twenty-four hours of field laboratory and familiarization.
4. In order to pass the course, the trainee must pass the written test with a minimum score of 75% and must pass the field-performance test. The latter is administered on a pass/fail basis.
5. The exact training format and content for each "Michigan Basic Radar Operator Training Course" will be approved by the Michigan Speed Measurement Task Force; however, the Michigan Speed Measurement Task Force will publish (and routinely update, as required) course materials for a model "Michigan Basic Radar Operator Training Course". These course materials will include:
  - a. A radar operator training manual.
  - b. A radar course instructor's manual.
  - c. A guide for radar course coordinators.
  - d. Visual and audio-visual aids.
  - e. A set of uniform statewide testing materials.

In summary, with respect to the adjudication of speeding cases that involve radar speed-measurement evidence, the Michigan Speed Measurement Task Force recommends that speed measuring radar device evidence be admissible in court only if the radar operator is certified by the Michigan Commission On Law Enforcement Standards.

For additional information regarding radar operator training, contact the Michigan Commission On Law Enforcement Standards (see Appendix).